

MINUTES OF ANIMAL CONTROL TASK FORCE MEETING--- August 13, 2009
HARPSWELL TOWN HALL

The second meeting of the Animal Control Task Force was called to order by Chair Sue Luce at 4 pm. Members attending were Don Miskill, Robert Small, Doug Johnson, Lee Johnson, and Sue Luce. No one was absent.

The first item on the agenda was to approve the minutes of the July 25, 2009 meeting. Vote was unanimous to accept. These minutes will be forwarded on to Linda Strickland for the town records.

Animal Control Officer Lee Johnson reported that he had not received any new complaints re: Mitchell Field since the last meeting.

Don Miskill reported that the Mitchell Field Implementation Committee is aware of our meetings, and they will get back to us at a future time with feedback and input. We discussed the current Mitchell Field rules, which Don will email to Sue L. for the next meeting.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK REPORTS: Don Miskill also reported that he has talked to members of the community at various locations, particularly at the Library, and one person was adamant that he/she wanted a time without dogs every day. The Task Force discussed this recommendation, and suggested we might look into a DOG FREE time of 11-1 every day, thus ensuring no dogs would bother possible picnickers during the lunch period. Enforcement could be maintained by contacting Lee Johnson, whose number should be posted at the entrance to the field. The committee will continue to investigate this idea with its canvassing campaign.

We discussed the latest field conditions with regard to dog waste. The field seems fairly clean even though there were many more dogs around during the Harpswell Festival. All dogs were on leashes in that area, and all seemed peaceful. The owners were responsible. Don Miskill will look into the Doggy Pro container costs. The Task Force feels that funds for this container and pickup might be paid for in a slightly higher dog registration fee or in a possible fee to bring dogs to the field. These ideas will be discussed more in the future with feedback from a canvassing campaign.

The task force discussed this canvassing campaign with the hope of having visitors to Mitchell Field fill them out as well as the general community. We discussed having the questionnaires with drop boxes at various spots such as the libraries, stores, post offices, Veggie Corner or as part of a regular town mailing. Task Force members would volunteer some time during a day or two to hand them out and collect them at the field itself. Sue Luce will put together some of our points for questions for the next meeting.

The task force discussed our plan to educate and remind people as to their personal responsibilities in maintaining the beauty and peacefulness of Mitchell Field. We considered the ways and means of a general mailing to townspeople making all the points we want. Some of these points might include making sure every owner has current registration and shots for each dog, and that no vicious dogs or dogs in heat be allowed. All dogs should be wearing their tags!

We discussed the bag dispensers. Several people spoke to Sue Luce about them being empty during the Festival. Don Miskill restated that there are plenty of bags available and that we should email him or Judith Redwine if containers are empty.

We discussed the reasons for having the Task Force. Several community members have wondered what brought this situation to a head. Don M. said several people spoke to members of the Mitchell Field Committee, and that the Selectmen didn't want to burden that Committee with yet another duty.

It was decided that we will report to the Selectmen through Cristy Eianne. Sue L. will get her email address.

Due to vacations and other issues, the Task Force set its next meeting for Sept. 10, 2009 at 4pm in the Town Hall. The meeting was adjourned at 5pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Luce, Chair